



THE WALLS OF OLD DELHI, IN ANCIENT INDIA.

Little is known of the history of Delhi before the Mahometan conquest in 1193, but the immense area—two miles to the south of the city—which is covered with the picturesque ruins of what is called "Old Delhi," is said to mark the site of the ancient Aryan city, Indraprastha. Though its crumbling walls are still almost intact in places, the spot is now only the haunt of camel drivers, goatherds and jackals. —Illustrated London News.

**PITY THE POOR PURSER.**  
*Women Seem to Cause Most of His Watery Woos.*

"Yes," said the purser on one of the big liners recently to the writer, who happened to be taking a trip from Liverpool to New York, "we have our own troubles. I can assure you, and I sometimes envy the captain his solitary enjoyment of the bridge, even during a sixty-mile gale. Passengers seem to think that the purser is put on a ship simply to answer foolish questions, and if I were to tell you half the things we are asked to do you would propose me for an active member of the Ananias Club.

"Of course, there is a good deal which we have to put up with as being part of our legitimate duties, though when a Yankee passenger brings us a \$100 yellowback and asks to have it changed into English, French, German and Spanish money, and stipulates that there must be twice as much French as German and half the remainder in English silver coins of the lowest denomination (presumably for tips), is it any wonder that we occasionally lose our tempers?"

"And then, again, the purser is always appealed to for the most trivial things. A woman passenger comes to the window, and if it is closed she will bang on it until it is opened, no matter if the sign is there as large as life that the office hours are from 11 to 2 and 4 to 6 o'clock, and she is honoring me with a call at 3 p. m. Then, when the window is raised for fear she will smash it to smithereens, she says, with a sweet smile: 'Oh, Mr. Purser, I am so sorry to disturb you. I know it is not your hour of business, but could you tell me if we will really land next Thursday, as I told my brother we would, and I know he will be waiting for me on the dock.'

"Of course, I am polite, but I have some difficulty in persuading her that I am not running the ship, and neither can I control the elements. She goes away with an expression that clearly shows she thinks I am keeping something back, and it will be my fault if we do not arrive at the time appointed.

"I remember on one trip, when the weather was particularly stormy, a woman passenger knocked at my door (after office hours, of course) and begged that she might speak to me for a few minutes. I politely asked her to enter, and then, her eyes starting out of her head with the excitement of suppressed emotion, she implored me to draw up her will. I protested that I was not a lawyer, but do you think she would be satisfied with that excuse? Not much. There

and then I had to draw up a document in the best legal phraseology that I could muster, liberally sprinkling through it such expressions as 'whereof,' 'the aforementioned,' 'leaves and bequeaths,' etc.

"When it was finished and I and my assistant had signed it she gave the young fellow a sovereign for his trouble, and as for me, well, she took off a very handsome ring and insisted on my accepting it. I have that ring yet, but what became of the donor I never knew, for when the storm abated and we were safe in port she never so much as bade me goodby, though I had repeatedly asked her to take back her ring. She was a very rich woman, evidently, and the 'be-

quests' in that will I drew up made my eyes bulge.

"Most passengers, when we have been a day or so out, bring the purser all their valuables, for which they receive a receipt. Some nervous women seem to think that a 'strong room' at sea is not a very secure place for their jewels, and they insist on seeing their treasures at least every day. One woman passenger made my life a burden during a recent voyage by taking her valuables out and putting them in again three times a day, until I told her that the next time she called for them I would not take them back again, whereat she told me with a sour look that I was 'impertinent,' and she would inform the

captain. I believe she did so, but the captain gave her a word or two of advice regarding the implicit trust which should be placed in a purser, and this quieted her. In fact, she afterward came to me and apologized for her seeming rudeness.

"As a rule, I conduct church service on board, as the captain does not enjoy the work, but prefers to remain on the bridge. Many a funeral service also has fallen to my lot, and I have even officiated at a christening. I am usually the one to whom a passenger flies when he is dissatisfied with his cabin, though the duty of changing a stateroom really rests with the head steward. Then, again, it is the purser who is appealed to when the passengers elect to hold a concert, and the young folks usually rush to him also when they want to have a dance on deck. A purser can be very popular or the reverse, and unless you have an excellent temper you stand a good chance of being the reverse.

"The funniest experience I had was on a recent trip, when there was on board a little girl of about twelve years old. She struck up a warm friendship with me, and would walk on deck for miles if I would only accompany her. She fell very ill during a storm and refused to be comforted. Her mother asked her if there was anything she could do which would ease her suffering, and the young imp (she was an American child) said there was. If she would only 'skidoo' and let the purser read a book to her she would feel better. And the indulgent mother came to me, stated the case, and—well, I complied with her request, and read to the child for a little while each day until she was well enough to come on deck again."—Tit-Bits



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